



NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

This notice describes how personal health information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully.

We respect patient confidentiality and only release personal health information about you in accordance with the State and Federal law. This notice describes our policies related to the use of the records of your care.

PRIVACY CONTACT

If you have any questions about this policy or your rights, contact the Privacy Officer.

USE AND DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION

In order to effectively provide you care, there are times when we will need to share your personal health information with others beyond Vision Care. This includes for:

TREATMENT

With your permission, we may use or disclose personal health information about you to provide, coordinate, or manage your care or any related services, including sharing information outside Vision Care that we are consulting with or referring you to.

PAYMENT

Information will be used to obtain payment for the treatment and services provided. This will include contacting your health insurance company for prior approval of planned treatment or for billing purposes.

HEALTHCARE OPERATIONS

We may use information about you to coordinate our business activities. This may include setting up your appointments, reviewing your care, or training staff.

INFORMATION DISCLOSED WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT

Under State and Federal law, information about you may be disclosed without your consent in the following circumstances:

EMERGENCIES

Sufficient information may be shared to address the immediate emergency you are facing.

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS AND CARE

We will be contacting you to remind you of future appointments or information about treatment alternatives or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you.

AS REQUIRED BY LAW

This would include situations where we have a subpoena, court order, or are mandated to provide public health information, such as communicable diseases or suspected abuse and neglect such as child abuse, elder abuse, or institutional abuse.

CORONERS AND FUNERAL DIRECTORS

We may disclose personal health information to a coroner or personal health examiner and funeral directors for the purposes of carrying out their duties.

GOVERNMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

We may disclose information to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law, such as audits, investigations, inspections, and licensure. There also might be a need to share information with the Food Drug Administration related to adverse events or product defects. We are also required to share information, if requested, with the Department of Health and Human Services to determine our compliance with federal laws related to healthcare.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY OR DANGER TO OTHERS

If a crime is committed on our premises or against our personnel, we may share information with law enforcement to apprehend the criminal. We also have the right to involve law enforcement and to warn any potential victims when we believe an immediate danger make exist to someone or if we believe you present a danger to yourself.

PATIENT RIGHTS

You have the following rights under State and Federal law.

COPY OF RECORD

You are entitled to inspect the personal health record Vision Care has generated about you. We may charge you a reasonable fee for copying and mailing your record.

RELEASE OF RECORDS

You may consent in writing to release of your records to others for any purpose you choose. This could include your attorney, employer, or others who you wish to have knowledge of your care. You may revoke this consent at any time, but only to the extent no action has been taken in reliance on your prior authorization.

RESTRICTION ON RECORD

You may ask us not to use or disclose part of the personal health information. This request must be in writing. Vision Care is not required to agree to your request if we believe it is in your best interest to permit use and disclosure of the information. The request should be given to the Program Director who will consult with the staff involved in your care to determine if the request can be granted.

CONTACTING YOU

You may request that we send information to another address or by alternative means. We will honor such request as long as it is reasonable and we are assured it is correct. We have a right to verify that the payment information you are providing is correct. Due to agency policy, we are not able to provide information by e-mail.

AMENDING RECORD

If you believe that something in your record is incorrect or incomplete, you may request we amend it. To do this, contact the Program Director and ask for the *Request to Amend Health Information* form. In certain cases, we may deny your request. If we deny your request for an amendment, you have a right to file a statement you disagree with us. We will then file our response and your statement and our response will be added to your record.

ACCOUNTING FOR DISCLOSURES

You may request a listing of any disclosures we have made related to your personal health information, except for information we used for treatment, payment, or healthcare operations purposes or that we shared with you or your family, or information that you gave us specific consent to release. It also excludes information we were required to release. To receive information regarding disclosure made for a specific time period no longer than six years and after April 14, 2003, please submit your request in writing to our Privacy Officer. We will notify you of the cost involved in preparing this list.

QUESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

If you have any questions, wish a copy of this Policy, or have any complaints, you may contact our Privacy Officer in writing at our office for further information. You also may complain to the Secretary of Health and Human Services if you believe Vision Care has violated your privacy rights. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

CHANGES IN POLICY

Vision Care reserves the right to change its Privacy Policy based on the needs of Vision Care and changes in State and Federal law.